

CAMBRIDGE CITY JOINT AREA COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 20th January 2015

Time: 4.30pm – 6.50pm

Present: County Councillors Cearns, Kavanagh, Manning, Scutt, Taylor (Chairwoman) and Walsh; City Councillors Blencowe, O'Reilly, Ratcliffe, Robertson, Smart and Tunnacliffe

Also in attendance: County Councillors Ashwood and Bourke; City Councillor Bird

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

County Councillors Kavanagh, Manning, Scutt and Taylor and City Councillor O'Reilly declared a non-statutory disclosable interest as members of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18th NOVEMBER 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman, subject to the deletion of the word 'Councillor' from R Hesketh's name at Minute 9 item 1), and the inclusion of a fifth bullet point in Minute 10, 'that off-street car parking charges should be looked at alongside on-street parking charges and Park & Ride charges'.

13. TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH:

(A) THODAY STREET CYCLE PARKING

The Committee received a report on objections received to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with a proposed cycle parking scheme in Thoday Street. The Committee had already considered this matter at its meeting on 23rd September 2014, but one objector had not been made aware of that meeting in advance, so the report was being re-presented for consideration to allow her the opportunity to address the Committee.

Nobuko Tollemache, a resident of Thoday Street, spoke against the proposed TRO. She raised a number of concerns, including that a petition with 114 signatures against the TRO had been submitted in July 2014 but was not mentioned in the officer report; many bike racks were already available close to Thoday Street; leaving bicycles parked on the street would encourage petty crime; passageways between houses and back gardens were wide enough for bicycles; fixed racks would become obstacles to vehicles. She showed two photographs, one showing a bike racks trial in 2013 and the other showing the pavement without parked bicycles.

Simon Nuttall, a resident of Thoday Street, spoke in support of the proposed scheme. He explained that what was being sought was the conversion of the marked parking area in front of two houses; the reaction to the trial scheme had

demonstrated good support for the racks. When the TRO was advertised only eight objections were received; at the heart of the objections was a failure to acknowledge the diversity of lifestyles in the street, including students and those with bike trailers. He showed two photographs, one of Thoday Street's pavement cluttered by parked bicycles, and the other of new racks in Great Eastern Street and the pavement clear.

Martin Lucas-Smith, representing the Cambridge Cycling Campaign, spoke in support of the TRO. He strongly welcomed this small proposal, which had been initiated by local residents and would increase transport choice. The bike racks would occupy only a small percentage of the over 100 car parking spaces in the street; the present lack of provision for bicycles failed to take account of the needs of pedestrians or wheelchair users. The officer report had comprehensively debunked the points of objection and it would be illogical not to approve the TRO.

Local Member County Councillor Bourke spoke. He said that he still supported the proposal, as he had in September. The survey was more significant than a petition, and had showed 61% of 112 people in favour. Points in favour of the proposal were that the houses in Thoday Street were terraced, with narrow alleyways to reach the back, and against that cyclists could park elsewhere than on the street, but motorists could not. He suggested that people tended to be swayed by a request to sign a petition; he had spoken to two people recently who had both supported the scheme when asked as part of the survey, and had signed the petition.

The Committee noted that written submissions in support of the proposals had been received from Local Member City Councillor Baigent, who was unable to be present, and from Boris Groisman, a resident of Thoday Street who had registered his request to speak after the deadline for doing so. At the Chairwoman's request, Councillor Baigent's email was read out. His comments included that the loss of two spaces would not unduly impact on car parking in Thoday Street and would benefit cyclists, and that he hoped the move would be seen by cyclists as the local authority recognising their needs, and encourage more people to cycle. He supported both the officer's comments and the majority of Thoday Street residents who had recognised the benefit of the scheme.

In the course of discussion, members

- pointed out that the proposal would take only two car parking bays out, and had received substantial support both from local members and in consultation
- drew attention to the difficulty of getting Dutch bikes and cargo bikes down alleyways, partly because cars were parked on the pavement
- commented that no residents owned the space outside their houses, and in Romsey, people parked where they could
- reported that similar schemes in Petersfield had attracted very little opposition
- supported the proposals as of particular benefit to those using the pavement for wheelchairs and prams.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve and make the order as advertised;
- b) Inform the objectors accordingly.

(B) THE ACCORDIA ESTATE

The Committee received a report on objections received to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with the Accordia estate. Members noted that there were currently no parking restrictions on the site, with the result that vehicles parked around junctions or on footway areas. A survey organised by the Accordia Community and Residents Association (ACRA) in March 2014 had shown support for measures to improve the safety of parking on the site.

Robert Lawson, Joint Secretary of ACRA, spoke in support of parking controls on Accordia, describing it as an island surrounded by parking restrictions and in urgent need of action to resolve parking problems, and thanking Councillor Ashwood for her strong interest and support in the matter. He said that the report before Committee did not address all the comments received in response to the statutory consultation on the TRO, or give any justification for the three changes proposed following the consultation, particularly in relation to their impact on road users who were not motorists. He expressed concern that it was unlikely that there would be any further measures to regulate parking on Accordia until the County Council had an overall parking policy in place, and urged officers to undertake any survey as quickly as possible, offering residents' assistance in conducting this.

Local Member County Councillor Ashwood spoke in support of the TRO, saying that it was urgently needed to address problems of safety and difficulties caused by parked cars, particularly should emergency vehicles need to get on to the estate. Development was continuing around the Accordia estate, increasing pressure on parking on Accordia, which was surrounded by parking schemes. She asked the Committee to approve the TRO, but requested one change, the removal of the change to the restriction proposed on Richard Foster Road (shown circled in Appendix 3).

The Committee noted that Local Member City Councillor Avery had sent an email in support of the proposed TRO. He had described this as one element of the solution to Accordia's parking problems and urged that a residents' parking scheme be brought forward rapidly. The Chairwoman commented that she cycled to work on Shaftesbury Road and was fully aware of the situation on Accordia.

In the course of discussion, members

- sought clarification of the decision not to proceed with developing residents' parking schemes, asked who had made it, and enquired whether all parking schemes were affected. Officers advised that
 - there were no parking projects in the most recent Transport Development Plan, which had been approved that morning by the County's Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee
 - there were currently insufficient staff available to take forward work on parking schemes; priority was currently being given to TROs, and efforts were being made to increase resources for parking work
- expressed concern at the decision not to carry out work to develop a residents' parking scheme

- sought clarification of the changes proposed in Appendix 3. Members noted that the two circles on Henslow Mews related to the removal of parking restrictions on one side of a junction or corner in order to maximise opportunities for residential parking; as the sight lines were anyway poor, additional parking would not have any great effect on visibility. Officers were however proposing the removal of the third change, that on Richard Foster Road near Aberdeen Avenue
- accepted the explanation of the changes in Appendix 3 and agreed that the Order should be made as amended following statutory consultation (as shown in Appendix 3) with the exception of Richard Foster Road, which should be implemented as shown in Appendix 2
- expressed concern at the length of time it was taking to undertake the parking policy review and devise a residents' parking scheme for Accordia
- pointed out that there was no provision for the parking of bicycles on Accordia, and suggested that a few strategically-placed cycle racks could discourage commuter parking
- commented that there should be no need for yellow lines on corners, as motorists should be aware already that parking on corners and junctions was not allowed
- urged that any parking review examine transport as well as parking.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve and make the order as amended following the statutory consultation
- b) Inform the objectors accordingly.

14. PAVEMENT LICENCE OBJECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH:

(A) CAFÉ MILANO, ST ANDREWS STREET, CAMBRIDGE

The Committee considered representations and objections received in response to the Pavement Licence application associated with Café Milano in St Andrews Street. Members noted that the café had been placing tables and chairs on the public highway for a number of years without a Pavement Licence, and was now seeking to formalise the existing arrangement.

Discussing the application, members

- pointed out that the application site was on a very busy stretch of St Andrews Street, not closed to traffic, with many buses passing and many pedestrians using the pavement, particularly at weekends, including users of prams and wheelchairs
- expressed support for the application in principle, but stressed the importance of balancing the needs of all users of the footway
- commented that putting a barrier up between the tables and chairs and the bank would do nothing to resolve the effect of funneling people leaving the bank
- noted that it was difficult to obtain a national standard for footway width; in a new area, one might expect 2 metres, but in an older area, it could be 1.5 to 2 metres
- drew attention to the A-board opposite the tables and chairs shown in Appendix 3 as forming an additional obstruction on the pavement and reducing the available width below the 2.7 metres quoted in Appendix 4

- expressed concern at the prevalence of A-boards on the city's pavements and enquired about the scope for restricting their use. In reply, officers advised that
 - there was no licence requirement for A-boards, though efforts were made to take enforcement action where an A-board was causing an obstruction
 - the A-board did not form part of the present application and placing restrictions on its use could not form part of the pavement licence
 - it would be possible, as a matter separate from the licence application, to remind the café of the proper use of the A-board, or to request its removal because of the concerns expressed by members at Committee.

It was resolved to:

- a) Refuse a Pavement Licence for the proposal, as amended following the statutory consultation;
- b) Inform the objectors accordingly.

(B) AROMI, 3 PEAS HILL, CAMBRIDGE

The Committee considered representations and objections received in response to the Pavement Licence application associated with Aromi in Peas Hill. Members noted that a proposed condition of the licence would be that the furniture would be removed when the serving window for ice cream was in operation and at peak times.

Speaking as a user of the footways in the Peas Hill area, City Councillor Bird expressed opposition to the proposals. She pointed out that there were over 16,000 Cambridge residents with a disability, many of whom had problems with eyesight or mobility which could make it very challenging for them to get round the increasingly-cluttered city centre; conditions in the city centre also discouraged disabled tourists from visiting. The width allowed for cycle paths was 2 metres, but the report on this application suggested that a lesser width was acceptable for wheelchair use. She disagreed with the report's statement that there were no significant equality or diversity implications on the grounds that the needs of the disabled needed to be taken fully into account, and expressed doubt that the tables and chairs would indeed be removed from the pavement in sunny weather.

Francesco Genovese, Director, AROMI Caffé Ltd, spoke in support of the application. He stressed that Aromi's values included respect for the community, and he would not have proceeded with his application had he believed it would be in any way disruptive for the circulation of people in Peas Hill. He had discussed all the issues with County Council officers and photographs and measurements had been taken with the tables and chairs in position. It would of course be in the café's own interest to remove the furniture at peak times, as it would not be pleasant for people sitting at tables to have people standing in a queue next to where they were sitting. In answer to a question of clarification on what constituted peak times, he said that the tables and chairs would not be put out on any occasion when the window was open to serve ice cream; there was anyway no room for tables and chairs when the window was open.

In the course of discussion, members

- expressed support for the application on the grounds that it would apply to quieter times only, and it was important to encourage business vitality in the area
- pointed out that there were plenty of tables in the broader pedestrianised part of Peas Hill, but the pavement outside Aromi was relatively narrow and obstructed by the lamppost, and by an A-board
- suggested that the food businesses in Peas Hill might wish to get together to fund a build-out to the pavement
- expressed concern about the practicalities of bringing tables and chairs in at peak times, and asked where they would be put, and what would happen if people were already seated at them; staff could find themselves having to decide between selling ice cream through the window or having tables and chairs out, as there was not space for both
- drew attention to the importance of enabling mobility for and acknowledging the needs of those with physical difficulties
- expressed sympathy for small businesses and the difficulties they faced in a time when large businesses were expanding
- commented that, although Peas Hill did not experience huge volumes of traffic, very large theatre lorries could be parked in the road for some time
- pointed out that the public required unobstructed access the Guildhall nearby.

It was resolved to:

- a) Refuse a Pavement Licence for the proposal following the statutory consultation;
- b) Inform the objectors accordingly.

15. COACH TRANSPORT TO AND FROM CAMBRIDGE

The Committee received an update report on the issue of Coach travel into and out of Cambridge, following its discussion on coach passenger facilities at Parkside at its meeting in September 2014. Members noted that it was not within the Committee's remit to make any decision on the facilities at Parkside; the role of coach travel in moving people into and out of the city would be examined as part of the City Deal work programme, under a 'Cambridge Capacity and Access Study' contract which would be let by the County Council. Any application for permanent coach passenger facilities would require a planning application to be considered by the City Council, and any relocation of the coach hub would be deemed a strategic project and would probably require changes to existing TROs. This process would be managed by the County Council's Traffic Management Service and through the County Council's Highways and Community Infrastructure Committee.

Anthony Bowen, Chairman of Christ's Pieces Residents' Association, spoke. He welcomed the report as far as it went, but stressed the importance of proper transport planning to meet the needs of the city, including the rationalising of bus services and an increase in cycle parking. A large amount of further building was planned in Cambridge, a city with less mileage of street than any comparable town, and with little scope for traffic diversion. He suggested that most buses should come only to one of a ring of points of interchange round the city – park and ride sites and the railway station were already an embryonic form of these – but the ring would only

work if there were good bus services criss-crossing the city between the points on the ring.

In the course of discussion, members

- reported that they had received a large number of emails expressing a range of views on the question of facilities for coach travel into and out of Cambridge
- sought clarification of the governance arrangements for the 'Cambridge Capacity and Access Study' contract. Members were advised that the study would be looking at how the city centre could develop and thrive with increasing numbers of residents and jobs, and increasing traffic levels. Governance would be within the City Deal
- reported that the City Council had agreed to participate in a strategic review of coach travel
- urged that any strategic study be undertaken as soon as possible
- commented that, pending the possible identification of a better alternative location for passenger facilities, operators would have to decide whether to apply for a small toilet facility at the Parkside site, but this would be a matter for the City's Planning Committee to determine
- noted that National Express had been willing to attend the present meeting, but the Chairwoman had concluded that this would be inappropriate, as the Committee had no strategic powers in this matter
- drawing attention to the report's statement that coach operators 'have chosen not to make use of the improved facilities at the railway station', enquired whether any powers were available to encourage them to use the station facilities or hub sites. Members were advised that this wording reflected that coach operators could choose to access facilities at the railway station, but continued to say that it was best for their customers to get as close as possible to the city centre. A number of coaches currently called at the Park and Ride sites at Maddingley and Trumpington, so fringe locations were already being used
- welcomed the update report and the proposed strategic review, but observed that the report omitted to mention the possibility of having a city centre coach stop and a hub located away from the centre, a solution which might be less controversial than the present arrangements. Members noted that the strategic review would pick up the issue of location for a coach hub.

The Head of Passenger Transport Services undertook to take note of all the points raised at the meeting and include them in any consideration of the matter.

It was resolved unanimously to note that a strategic review would be taking place of the future role of coach travel to serve an expanding city.

Chairwoman